

Message Text

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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC POSTS

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TAGS:

SUBJECT:PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

1. ON MAY 2 THE PRESIDENT ISSUED A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES TO STRENGTHEN U.S. PARTICIPATION IN WORLDWIDE EFFORTS TO OVERCOME DISEASE AND ILL HEALTH. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO BRING THIS STATEMENT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS. TEXT OF STATEMENT FOLLOWS:

QUOTE WE IN THE UNITED STATES ENJOY ONE OF THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF HEALTH IN THE WORLD. INFECTIOUS DISEASES ARE NO LONGER A MAJOR CAUSE OF DEATH AND MOST AMERICANS TAKE FOR GRANTED THAT THEIR CHILDREN WILL REACH HEALTHY ADULTHOOD. THIS IS NOT TRUE IN MANY OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD -- EACH YEAR MORE THAN 15.5 MILLION CHILDREN, NEARLY ALL OF THEM IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, DIE BEFORE THEY REACH THE AGE OF FIVE. HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE AFFLICTED BY SUCH DISEASES AS MALARIA, LEPROSY, AND

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SCHISTOSOMIASIS, DISEASES WHICH ARE UNFAMILIAR TO MOST AMERICANS BUT WHICH EXACT A TERRIBLE TOLL IN HUMAN SUFFERING AND WASTED PRODUCTIVE POTENTIAL. AS MANY AS 40 MILLION PEOPLE SUFFER SOME FORM OF BLINDNESS -- A TRULY GLOBAL PROBLEM THAT IS LARGELY PREVENTABLE AND OFTEN REVERSIBLE.

NO NATION CAN ANY LONGER VIEW THESE TRAGIC CONDITIONS AS SOMEONE ELSE'S PROBLEM. IN A WORLD GROWING MORE INTERDEPENDENT DAY BY DAY WE INCREASINGLY SHARE EACH OTHER'S DISTRESS AND DANGERS, AS WELL AS THE FRUITS OF MANKIND'S SUCCESSES.

LATE LAST MONTH THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION CONFIRMED THAT WE APPEAR TO BE IN THE FINAL STAGE OF THE ERADICATION OF SMALLPOX -- NO CASE HAS BEEN REPORTED ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS. THIS HISTORIC ACCOMPLISHMENT SHOWS WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED WHEN NATIONS COOPERATE WITH DEEP COMMITMENT.

MY ADMINISTRATION IS DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING PROGRAMS WHICH HELP PEOPLE MEET THEIR BASIC HUMAN NEEDS. THE UNITED STATES, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, MUST DEVELOP A TRULY INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM TO IMPROVE WORLDWIDE HEALTH, NUTRITION AND FAMILY PLANNING. WE HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF SHARED EFFORT WITH OTHER NATIONS IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH, AND WE PLAN TO BUILD ON THE SOLID RECORD WE HAVE ESTABLISHED.

CONSISTENT WITH THE ANNOUNCED EXPANSION OF FOREIGN AID, AND OUR EFFORT TO FOCUS THAT AID ON THE POOREST OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLE, MY ADMINISTRATION HAS UNDERTAKEN A
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REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH NEEDS. OUR AIM WAS TO DETERMINE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS IN WHICH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS COULD HELP REDUCE THE PERSONAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF WIDESPREAD MALNUTRITION, INFECTIOUS DISEASES, AND OTHER HEALTH HAZARDS INCLUDING THOSE ASSOCIATED WITH FREQUENT CHILDBIRTH.

AS A RESULT OF THAT STUDY, I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY MY INTENTION TO LAUNCH A PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN THE PARTICIPATION OF THE UNITED STATES IN WORLDWIDE EFFORTS TO OVERCOME DISEASE AND ILL HEALTH.

OUR EFFORTS WILL BE BASED ON THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

--A BASIC MINIMUM LEVEL OF HEALTH, NUTRITION AND FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO THE WORLD'S POOR, WHETHER THEY LIVE IN RURAL AREAS OR URBAN SLUMS.

--DEVELOPING NATIONS CAN EVENTUALLY MEET THEIR OWN HEALTH NEEDS IF WE ASSIST THEM IN STRENGTHENING THEIR INSTITUTIONS AND BUILDING THEIR OWN HEALTH SYSTEMS.

--COMMUNITY BASED PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, INCLUDING THE USE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND THE TRAINING OF APPROPRIATE HEALTH PERSONNEL AS NEAR AS POSSIBLE TO WHERE THEY WILL DELIVER SERVICES, IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF ACHIEVING THE STANDARD OF HEALTH WE DESIRE FOR ALL PEOPLE.

OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO CONCENTRATE ON THE PREVENTION OF DISEASE AND ILL HEALTH. WE WILL PUT SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON PROVIDING CLEAN DRINKING WATER, BASIC SANITATION, BASIC IMMUNIZATIONS, AND EFFORTS TO PREVENT AND TREAT BLINDNESS. THIS EMPHASIS WILL BE REFLECTED IN OUR OWN PROGRAMS AND IN OUR SUPPORT OF PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED BY VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

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WE WILL WORK TOWARD THE LASTING CONTROL OR ERADICATION OF THE MAJOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES, PARTICULARLY "TROPICAL" DISEASES THAT CONTINUE TO BE THE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH AND DISABILITY.

WE WILL GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE MAJOR CAUSES OF DEATH IN CHILDREN -- DIARRHEA AND RESPIRATORY DISEASE, PARTICULARLY WHEN AGGRAVATED BY MALNUTRITION.

PRIVATE INDUSTRY PROVIDES MOST OF THE GOODS AND SERVICES NEEDED TO SUSTAIN THE WORLD'S HEALTH. IT CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE BY EXERCISING INITIATIVE AND CAREFUL JUDGEMENT IN DEVELOPING NEEDED PRODUCTS AND IN HELPING TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE USED WISELY TO IMPROVE HEALTH IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

WE RECOGNIZE THE INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTION VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE MADE IN IMPROVING THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, AND THEIR SPECIAL SERVICES IN DEVELOPING NATIONS. WE WILL STRIVE TO AID THEM IN THEIR EFFORTS AND TO COORDINATE OUR ACTIVITIES.

WE PLAN TO:

--STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONS IN OUR GOVERNMENT WHICH ARE DEALING WITH INTERNATIONAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, REEMPHASIZING OUR COMMITMENT TO HELP MEET THE HEALTH NEEDS OF OTHER NATIONS AND IMPROVE THE USE OF EXISTING RESOURCES THROUGH BETTER COORDINATION.

--BUILD GREATER AWARENESS AMONG THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OF THE LEGITIMACY AND THE IMPORTANCE FOR OUR FOREIGN POLICY GOALS OF IMPROVING OTHER PEOPLE'S CAPACITY TO MEET THEIR BASIC

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HUMAN NEEDS.

--WORK CLOSELY WITH NATIONS AROUND THE WORLD, INDIVIDUALLY AND THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS WHO, UNICEF, THE WORLD BANK, AND THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS, TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

--MORE FULLY INVOLVE AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES, TECHNOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS, AND OTHER PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS IN MAKING U.S. SCIENTIFIC AND PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES MORE ACCESSIBLE TO THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

I HAVE ASKED SECRETARY CALIFANO TO GO TO GENEVA AS HEAD OF THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION TO THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY, WHERE HE WILL DESCRIBE FURTHER THE STEPS MY ADMINISTRATION INTENDS TO TAKE.

NO ONE COUNTRY ALONE CAN BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS. I ASK THE LEADERS OF OTHER NATIONS TO JOIN ME IN THIS GLOBAL EFFORT. EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS REQUIRE DETAILED AND CAREFUL PLANNING. THE STRATEGY I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY AND WHICH SECRETARY CALIFANO WILL DESCRIBE TO THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY NEXT WEEK WILL BE DEVELOPED AS PART OF OUR BUDGETARY AND LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR. WHERE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, WE WILL MOVE IMMEDIATELY TO CARRY OUT THIS PROGRAM.

THE WORLD CAN SOMEDAY MEET THE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE, IF WE CARE ENOUGH, AND IF WE START NOW. I BELIEVE ALL AMERICANS SHARE MY PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO THE GOAL OF A WORLD FREE FROM UNNECESSARY DISEASE, A WORLD IN WHICH LIFE IS HELD SACRED, AND IN WHICH CHILDREN BORN ANYWHERE ON EARTH HAVE THE SAME CHANCE TO GROW UP TO ENJOY A HEALTHY, FULFILLING LIFE. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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